

Expert Tips, News and Happenings from Chicago's Home-Improvement Community

COMPILED BY KATHY KIDWELL



Photo courtesy of Ulta Lit Technologies

Rescue Your Holiday Lights

This Nov. 26, the Glenview-based **Ulta Lit Technologies** encourages you to celebrate National Christmas Decorating Day without throwing away any of the string lights you've stored for the past year. With Ulta Lit's LightKeeper Pro (available at major retailers), you have a quick fix to most miniature holiday-light set failures. When an individual bulb "shunt" fails to energize and a section of lights go out instead of just the affected bulb, place the LightKeeper Pro to the burnt-out bulb,

pull the Quick Fix Trigger, and voila! A shaped, electrical pulse will be sent through the defective bulb, clearing the shunt and allowing the rest of the string of lights to operate properly. Have other holiday-lighting dilemmas? Call Ulta Lit's helpline (888-ULTA-LIT), running Nov. 26 through Dec. 24, and the team at Ulta Lit will walk you through troubleshooting options. (888) 858-2548, www.lightkeeperpro.com.

Garden Ridge Stores Open in Schaumburg, Aurora

Touting itself as "The biggest decor superstore you've never heard of," the brand-new Garden Ridge stores that replaced the old Expo Design Centers in Schaumburg and Naperville this fall are bringing incredible value and variety to the Chicagoland home decor scene. At almost three acres in size with over half a million items, Garden Ridge offers a huge selection of Holiday decor, furniture, framed art and mirrors, silk floral and greenery, bedding and anything else you can imagine for decorating and entertaining. "Chicago truly doesn't have anything like it," says Garden Ridge CEO Tom Kibarian. "Picture yourself in a store the size of Walmart that is filled only with home decor that looks great and at incredible value." Visit Garden Ridge at 1325 N. Meacham Road in Schaumburg or 956 Route 59 in Aurora/Naperville, or online at www.gardenridge.com. 📍

Editorial Resources begin on page 20.

WHAT'S HAPPENING This Month

NOV. 7-21

Winter Farmer's Market

9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Chicago Botanic Garden

1000 Lake Cook Road

Glencoe, IL 60022

(847) 835-5440

farmersmarket@chicagobotanic.org

NOV. 8-11

Culinary Boot Camp

The Chopping Block

The Merchandise Mart, Chicago

(312) 644-6360

NOV. 12-13

Sample Sale

The Merchandise Mart

222 Merchandise Mart Plaza

Chicago, IL 60654

www.merchandisemartdesigncenter.com

NOV. 18-21

Autumn Arts & Crafts Festival

Odeum Sports & Expo Center

1033 N. Villa Ave.

Villa Park, IL 60181

(630) 941-9292

www.hpifestivals.com

Expert Q&A

Q: What quick projects can I do to spruce up my home so I can enjoy it during the hibernation that winter months bring?

A: Here are five projects to put on your To-Do list:

1. Paint a room that is looking shabby. A fresh coat of paint remains the easiest and quickest way to transform a room.

2. Frame three summer/fall photos in a large format (for greater impact). They'll remind you of happy memories when the snow buries you inside.

3. The fireplace is almost always the focal point of a room—have the flue cleaned, and play up the decor around it. But remember: less is more. Too many knick-knacks will detract from its beauty.

4. Dark rooms are dismal. Make sure you have enough lighting in the rooms that are used the most. One overhead fixture is useful, but doesn't create ambiance. Add a mix of table and floor lamps.

5. Make sure your entryway is inviting and clear of clutter. The entryway or foyer is perfect for a small lamp, attractive storage baskets and a mirror. Make the first step inside welcoming.



—Laura Heitz, principal designer, Right Now Redesign Inc., Chicago